



Tips for Writing a Competitive User Proposal

If you need assistance, contact the Facility staff before writing your proposal. Staff are available to provide details about equipment and capabilities, as well as:

- Help confirm the feasibility of your approach
- Help estimate and justify the amount of facility time you are requesting
- Help address why this specific facility is the best choice to meet your requirements
- Discuss opportunities for collaboration that might strengthen your proposal
- Provide constructive comments on your draft proposal

For assistance, contact [Facility Staff](#) early. Response times increase as the proposal deadline approaches.

Include background information on why the proposed experiment is important:

- Include a precisely defined objective; don not combine loosely related experiments in a single proposal
- Clearly articulate the science case; state the problem and its importance
- Place your research plan in the context of what others have done and are doing (include references to literature where appropriate)
- State why your proposal is timely and describe what is particularly innovative about your strategy to address the problem

All reviewers may not be experts in your specialty. Write with that in mind.

Address how the experiment will make a difference. Focus on how this particular effort will contribute to the field. Describe the proposed work including samples, methods, and procedures:

- State clearly and exactly what you are going to synthesize, measure, or calculate
- Provide sufficient detail to demonstrate that you have thought carefully about your plan
- Describe the techniques to be used to generate and analyze the data
- Demonstrate familiarity with prior work done in this area
 - Refer to current literature, especially your own work
 - Summarize the key points of cited references and explain how your proposed work fits in
- Explain why you need the Foundry and its instruments or methods
- Justify the amount of time requested
- Identify potential showstoppers and how you plan to avoid them; if you don't identify them, the reviewers will!

Make sure your publication record is up to date.